

## Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07  
LAB-04 NSAE-00 /033 W  
-----021844Z 028388 /66

R 011709Z APR 77  
FM US MISSION EC BRUSSELS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3449  
INFO ALL EC CAPTIALS  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 3261

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ELAB PINT ICFTU  
SUBJECT: AN ICFTU VIEW OF PROTUGUESE LABOR SITUATION

1. AFTER A TWO-DAY VISIT TO LISBON THIS WEEK, ENZO FRISO, HEAD OF THE EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU), CHARACTERIZES THE TRADE UNION SITUATION IN PORTUGAL AS "VERY BAD," BUT WITH CLEAR PROSPECTS OF IMPROVING.

2. ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF PORTUGUESE WORKERS--INTERSINDICAL NATIONAL (CGTP) IS CURRENTLY DOMINANT ON THE PORTUGUESE TRADE UNION SCENE, FRISO HAS HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. THE NEW LABOR MINISTER, MALDONADO GONELHA, IS A FORMER UNIONIST WITH THE WISDOM AND STRENGTH TO TAKE CHARGE OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIALIST PARTY STRATEGY. MALDONADO ALSO HAS THE "COMPLETE DONFIDENCE" OF PRIME MINISTER MARIO SOARES.

B. SUBSEQUENT TO THE COMMUNIST VICTORY AT THE ITERSINDICAL CONGRESS IN JANUARY (LISBON 0891),  
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THERE HAS DEVELOPED THE "POLITICAL WILL"-- BOTH IN GOVERNMENT AND IN THE SOCIALIST PARTY--TO GIVE A HIGHER PRIORITY TO THE LABOR SECTOR.

C. FURTHER, DEMOCRATIC FORCES, INCLUDING THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, ARE SERIOUSLY SEEKIG TO ESTABLISH BASES FOR COOPERATION ON THE

LABOR FRONT.

D. ELECTION AND REFERENDUM FIGURES COLLECTED  
BY THE GOVERNMENT SHOW THAT THE COMMUNISTS DO NOT  
HAVE THE MASS SUPPORT AMONG WORKERS THAT THEIR VICTORY  
WOULD INDICATE.

3. ACCORDING TO FRISO, THE STRATEGY OF THE GOVERNMENT  
AND OF NON-COMMUNIST LABOR LEADERS INCLUDES:

A. ENACTING LEGISLATION ALLING--OR PERHPAS  
REQUIRING--UNION OFFICER ELECTIONS TO TAKE PLACE AT  
PLANTS AND OFFICE DRING WORKING HOURS. THE HOPE  
IS THAT THIS WOULD REMOVE THE ADVANTAGE THAT A DIS-  
CIPLINED COMMUNIST MINORITY ENJOYS IN OFF-WORKSITE  
ELECTIONS.

B. ESTABLISHING 16 INDUSTRIAL FEDERATIONS,  
RATHER THAN A NEW NATIONAL CENTER, TO SERVE AS THE  
STUCTURE FOR BUILDING UP NON-COMMUNIST STRENGTH  
IN THE LABOR FORCE.

4. FRISO AND OTHER ICFTU SOURCES POINT OUT THAT THE  
CGTPJS CONSTITUTION PROHIBITS AFFILIATION TO WORLD  
LABOR GROUPS, BUT NOT NECESSARILY TO THE EUROPEAN  
TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC). ACCORDING TO THESE  
SOURCES, PRIME MINISTER SOARES, DURING HIS RECENT  
VISIT TO BRUSSELS, MET FOR A HALF HOUR WITH AN ICFTU  
GROUP HEADED BY GENERAL SECRETARY KERSTEN, AND EXPRESSED  
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THE HOPE THAT A CGTP REQUEST TO AFFILIATE WITH THE ETUC  
WOULD BE REJECTED. SO FAR THE ETUC HAS RECEIVED NO  
SUCH REQUEST, NOR ANY SIGNAL THAT ONE MIGHT  
BE COMING.HINTON

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
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EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009